upon his ship at sea facing the hurricane of the West Indies. The dry sand of the upper bank struck the sides of the wreck with great force, and flying over it cut his face so that he could not see any longer. He made his way to the lee of the deck house and looked out over the water to see how his vessel stood the strain. The riding light was still showing in the same place; but a faint rattling told plainly that both anchors were now on the bottom, and that the mate, with the instinct of the true sailor, was giving them chain as fast as he could, with the hope of holding on. How it blew! The wind came in fierce gusts, rushing, tearing, over the lost ship.

The sails of the anchored schooner had been lowered just after dark. He had heard the creaking of the halyards. There would be no great sea where she lay, but enough to test the strength of the ground tackle she possessed. He wished vaguely that he had gone aboard. It was the place for him, upon the deck of his ship.

They Brought in the Explosive to Blow Up the Vessel.

He watched the riding light for some minutes. It was jumping now with the rise and fall of the schooner. It was a desperate undertaking to row a small boat out to her; but the struggle appealed to him strongly. He should have gone aboard. He would go; and let himself down over the side of the wreck, with no concern save for the safety of the schooner and the crew aboard her. If he failed to make her, it was of no particular matter.

The small boat was made fast on the shore, and he reached her easily. The oars were in her, and she was all ready to row out, for the inside of the bank was partly sheltered, and there was no sea there yet. It would be a row across the wind with it a little astern, and he was a strong man. The wildness of the night seemed to stir something within him, and he grasped the oars eagerly for the struggle. He sent the small boat's head out into the night and across that hurricane swept reef with a feeling of something akin to exhilaration. A blast of wind flung a sea over her, and the salt sea flew in his face, taking his breath for the instant; but he spat out the brine and drove the boat ahead.

The riding light appeared to get nearer. He was making good headway, although the water was flying over the boat and tossing her about like a cork. All around and about him the sea was white with a phosphorescent light from the breaking seas; but it failed to outline the hull of his vessel. He headed for the riding light, and he must make it, or—

He turned his head now and again to keep the course. The light did not draw closer very fast, and he knew he was rowing furiously. Then he noticed that it drew more and more to leeward. He was rowing with the wind now well aft. He knew what it meant: that his vessel was dragging her anchors and that there was little or no hope that he would board her. She might strike, or she might make the open sea. The mate was an able seaman and would get some canvas on her if he could to try to fight her off. Out on the wild, storm swept ocean there might be safety. To the leeward lay certain death.

He rowed now with increased vigor. He would endeavor to get close enough to hail her at least, even though he could not board her. Over the tops of the breaking seas the small boat fairly flew. She was gaining upon the receding light. The Captain turned his head and saw he was almost alongside. He made out the voices of the men calling to each other as they close reefed the mainsail. He could hear the mate's orders, howled into a shriek, sounding faintly but unintelligible above the roar of the wind and sea. He now made out the hull of the vessel. He was close aboard. Then the riding light went out.

He knew he had seen the ending; for they had put the forestaysail on her and were driving her out to sea. As for himself, he was a lost man. He was so close to her now that he stood up and hailed.

"Keep her east southeast!" he roared out.

A questioning hail came through the night, a wild, terrified cry.

"Keep her east southeast! Good by!" he answered.

"Aye, aye, sir! Good by, sir!" came the voice of the mate.

The Buccaneer fought her way out that night. She lost her foresail and half her other canvas before the finish; but she went to sea safely.

Three days later she came in and anchored near the wreck of the steamer. The mate and two men went ashore and searched the reef for signs of their Captain. The boat was gone, and so was he. This told the story. Two hours later they were tearing up the rusted hulk of the Stella Polare, and they carried tons of her to Key West in the little schooner, with the mate in command.

MORTUARY MEMENTOS

By Theodore Maxon

EPITAPHS have seemingly of late years gone out of fashion. The custom of the departed one addressing living friends in lines engraved on a cold stone, or of the aforesaid friends placing unwarranted statements over the graves of those who cannot answer back if, perchance, they might feel aggrieved by the mortuary lines, is considered to-day of doubtful taste.

Perhaps so. Yet, was the old fashioned epitaph queerer than some of the sculptured monstrosities set up in present day graveyards? Some of the ornate stones marking the resting places of the helpless dead in modern cemeteries should make the aforesaid dead turn in their coffins.

Not a few still retain a taste for epitaphs, though perhaps not given to their composition as was young John Chivery. At least, few would be as honest as was that serio-comic Dickensian character when he mentally engraved this inscription upon a tombstone in Saint George's churchyard, after Little Dorrit had been obliged to refuse his offer of hand and fortune:

Here lie the mortal remains of John Chivery, Never anything worth mentioning, Who died about the end of the year One thousand eight hundred and twenty-six, Of a broken heart, Requesting with his last breath that the word AMY might be inscribed over his ashes, Which was accordingly directed to be done, By his afflicted Parents.

A Dripping Pan Memento

TO come to actual epitaphs, and while still keeping the gargoyle like productions of modern tombstone cutters in mind, here is the attested fact of a dripping pan being cut into the headstone of a grave in Wooditton churchyard, near Newmarket, England. The inscription on this curious stone reads:

To the memory of William Simonds, who died March 1, 1753, aged 80 years.

Here lies my corpse who was the man
That loved a sop in a dripping pan;
But now believe me I am dead—
See here the pan stands at my head.

Still for sop to the last I cried,
But could not eat; and so I died.
My neighbors they perhaps may laugh
Now they do read my epitaph.

Not long since the old Pettit's Hotel at Jamaica, used by Washington as his headquarters at the battle of Long Island, was pulled down, and a tombstone was found in the fireplace of the sitting room. On the stone, thus brought to so gross a use, was this inscription:

To the memory of Mary Valentine, wife of Jeremyah, who died in 1720, aged 56 years.

Weep not for me my children dear,
I am not dead but sleeping here.
The det is paid, the grave you see,
Prepare for death—follow me.

Shaky Spelling in Old Days

THE spelling of those days was a little shaky at best; but tombstone engravers seem to ever be prone to deficient orthography and mistakes in general. The writer has a vivid remembrance of coming suddenly in an old country churchyard upon the grave of a patriarch who, as he supposed, had rivaled Enoch's first born; for there plainly to be read was the statement that the occupant of the grave had "departed this life, aged 969 years." As relatives of this modern Methuselah were still alive in the village, inquiry yielded the information that "the pesky cement must a fell out o' that hole ag'in!" The local tombstone artist had first engraved a 9 instead of a 6; but he had "knocked off something" on the price, and the thrifty relatives had set up the stone with the hope that cement would repair the mistake in the dead man's age.

Of all bitterness in this life, nothing can be compared to that which gains its rise in family estrangements and feuds. And that man's hate sometimes tries to reach beyond the grave—or, at least, over the grave to wound those that remain—is given proof in the following epitaphs found in Maine:

Emma, daughter of Abraham and Matilda Cox, and wife of Theodore Shallen, died July 9, 1847, aged 26 years, leaving five children; married too young against her father's will. Single women, take warning.

The second is from an obscure corner in York's ancient cemetery:

Here lies the body of Jonathan Drew,
Who cheated all he ever knew.
His Maker he'd have cheated, too,
But that his God he never knew.

Beneath a leaning slab in an old Massachusetts burying ground slumbers an ancient cynic, caustically rebuking, even in death, the curious, in this wise:

I was somebody;
Who, is no business of yours.

The grim humor of soldiers is not often displayed on tombstones, but "The London Tribune" vouches for the following inscriptions upon a soldier's grave at Winchester.

In memory of Thomas Thetcher, a grenadier in the North Regiment of Hants Militia, who died of a violent fever contracted by drinking small beer when hot, the 12th of May, 1764, aged 26 years.

In grateful remembrance of whose universal good will towards his comrades this Stone is placed here at their expense as a small testimony of their regard and concern.

Here sleeps in peace a Hampshire grenadier,
Who caught his death by drinking cold small beer.
Soldiers, be wise from his untimely fall,
And when ye're hot drink Strong, or none at all.

This memorial being decayed, was restor'd by the Officers of the Garrison, A. D. 1781.

An honest soldier never is forgot,
Whether he died by Musket or by Pot.

This stone was placed by the North Hants Militia when disembodied at Winchester on 26 April, 1802, in consequence of the original stone being destroyed.

Many Doggerels in New England

OLD New England is particularly rich in old time burying grounds, and doggerels (which might be termed farcical but for the solemnity of death in which they are enshrouded) were used lavishly upon the tombstones. It was an outlet for the genius of the local poets, there being few country papers with their "Poet's Corner" in those old days.

Prostrate upon the bank of the Piscataqua in the Kittery Point, Maine, cemetery, lies a granite block, bearing these words rough hewn by the hand of a member of the only race that could ever perpetrate a bull upon a gravestone:

Bridget and I have two children dear,
One in Ireland and the other here.

At Alfred, Maine, in the old First Parish churchyard, is this sample of lack of humor:

John Hall, 1762–1813.
May he rest in peace till we meet again.
His Loving Wife.